

WCPA Strategic Plan

2005 - 2012

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WCPA STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2012

INTRODUCTION

The World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) is one of six Commissions of IUCN (The World Conservation Union). The Commissions are volunteer networks of individual experts that contribute to the IUCN Mission, which is:

“to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.”

WCPA and its partners strive to provide leadership on protected areas issues to governments, NGOs, communities, and other key stakeholders. Emphasizing its power to convene a diversity of actors, WCPA works by bringing science, knowledge and experience to bear on decision-making to address the existing challenges and future issues and opportunities in order to realize a common vision:

“that society fully recognizes and supports the importance of protected areas in the 21st Century by: securing key places for biological and cultural diversity, promoting equity and justice, maintaining the quality of the environment, and ensuring the sustainable use of the natural resources for poverty reduction, food and water security, and the prevention of conflicts.”

To realise this vision the mission of the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) is:

“to promote an effectively managed, representative system of marine and terrestrial protected areas as an integral part of IUCN mission.”

The IUCN Programme on Protected Areas is one of the major programmatic areas of IUCN. WCPA has aligned its activities in support of the Programme on Protected Areas, and there is a close working relationship between the Programme and WCPA in pursuit of shared strategic objectives.

Protected areas serve a variety of purposes for society. They are vital for life on earth, they conserve vital biodiversity and many also offer the world a model of how people can live in harmony with nature. There are treasured landscapes reflecting the inherited cultures of many generations, and they hold spiritual values for many societies. Protected areas also represent the diversity of the earth's history and the current natural processes, and provide many ecosystem and wider environmental services, such as clean air, copious supplies of water and nutrients. Protected areas are an expression of community goals to maintain the value of biodiversity and to ensure these values can be passed on to future generations. Indeed protected areas are a promise of perpetuating today's values for the generations to come.

Protected areas are an expression of hope for the future while providing immediate reciprocity. Protected areas contribute a myriad of services that include clean air, water, sources of fiber and protein, spiritual experiences, recreation, sources of knowledge, livelihoods, protecting unique cultures and offering educational experiences from connecting with nature. This latter opportunity will become increasingly important to the ever-increasing world population that lives in urban areas. The recognition of all of these values is reflected in the dramatic growth in the numbers and extension of protected areas over recent decades.

The Vth World Parks Congress held in Durban, South Africa in 2003 brought together the world's protected area experts and other key stakeholders to consider how the benefits of protected areas could be sustained and extended beyond their boundaries in support of sustainable human, social and economic development. The Congress defined the challenges of the future and provided direction to the world, particularly through the Durban Accord and Action Plan. Many of the Congress outputs were included in the Program of Work on Protected Areas under the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD).

The articulation of a 'new paradigm' for protected areas and its approval at the World Parks Congress summarizes not only the outcome of the Congress but this Strategic Plan as well. It is as follows:

“In this changing world, we need a fresh and innovative approach to protected areas and their role in broader conservation and development agendas. This approach demands the maintenance and enhancement of our core conservation goals, equitably integrating them with the interests of all affected people. In this way the synergy between conservation, the maintenance of life support systems and sustainable development is forged. We see protected areas as vital means to achieve this synergy efficiently and cost-effectively. We see protected areas as providers of benefits beyond boundaries—beyond their boundaries on a map, beyond the boundaries of nation-states, across societies, genders and generations.”

This WCPA Strategic Plan provides an opportunity to respond to the challenges posed by the Durban Action Plan and the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas, and provides a compass to orient our efforts to respond to the directions adopted by the world's leaders through the Millennium Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity. It also charts a way forward that effectively engages with other global and regional programmes of IUCN as well as with other IUCN Commissions and Members.

If you work on the enhancement of the protected areas estate anywhere in the world, you share a common passion with all others involved in protected areas. Whether your focus is on establishment, management or protection, your passion is indisputable and has required not only long hours but also personal commitment to achieve your objectives. We know that for some, this commitment has led them to give their lives for this cause. In their memory and honour, let us continue to strive to enhance these special places on the globe and in doing so we invite you to join WCPA in making this Strategic Plan a reality.


This decade is widely regarded as one of the key opportunities to address the challenges presented at the Vth World Parks Congress, and this Strategic Plan must lay the foundation for measurement of this achievement by the VIth World Parks Congress.



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December 2005

1. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES - THE ROLE OF WCPA

1.1 The challenges in front of us.

Protected areas now cover over 13% of the earth's land surface. This resounding success comes at a time when the world's protected areas face an unrelenting and ever-increasing rate of change. Global level changes from climate change, invasive species, fragmentation of the natural landscape, increasing urbanization and growing demands upon natural resources are placing direct and growing threats on protected areas.

Enhanced and shared knowledge of the implications of these threats and how to address them is essential for meeting biodiversity conservation and a range of other societal objectives.

Conserving biodiversity is at times difficult to maintain as a top priority because of other imperatives such as enhanced education, improved human health and the alleviation of poverty. In response, the conservation community is emphasizing the ways in which conservation can contribute to poverty alleviation and enhanced livelihoods through sustainable use of natural resources and equitable sharing of benefits. In essence there is a call for biodiversity conservation to be "mainstreamed" into social and economic development throughout the production landscape. This approach strengthens and complements, but does not replace protected areas as a primary tool for conservation of biodiversity, and the diversity of earth's heritage and landscapes. Nevertheless, there is mounting and unnerving evidence of short-term decisions that forego environmental, social and economic benefits that a protected area system offers at national and global levels. The values of protected areas must be better communicated to decision makers.

The capacity to manage protected areas is weak in many countries and must be strengthened. This relates to meeting biodiversity conservation objectives as well as other objectives relating to sustainable development and broader landscape planning.

The success in numbers and area covered by terrestrial protected areas is not the case in the marine environment. The marine environment faces major threats and there are major shortfalls in coverage, with only 0.05% of marine environments protected. There remain many other ecosystems that are poorly represented in the global protected area system.

Democratization of societies, including decentralization of authority and responsibility over protected areas, has provided opportunities for local governments, indigenous people and local people to become more directly involved, and for their long-standing efforts to be recognized. New governance models are the result.

Much has been accomplished but more is required. Despite enormous advances in knowledge and understanding, management effectiveness is waning and investment in protected areas continues to weaken. Policy and decision makers as well as protected area managers often make decisions based on inadequate information. More importantly, managers continue to make decisions in isolation, without effectively learning from other experience.

1.2. The opportunities facing WCPA

Protected areas provide a response to the global environmental, social and economic challenges of modern society. The Durban Action Plan encompassed priority responses. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognizes protected areas as essential for in situ conservation (Article 8) and the countries that ratified the Convention agreed in Kuala Lumpur in 2004 (COP7) to a Programme of Work (PoW) on Protected Areas that prescribes specific targets and actions (Appendix X). This fulfilled the first target of the Durban Action Plan. In turn, the CBD Program of Work provides the international policy framework to address the remaining fourteen targets of the Durban Action Plan (Box 1).

The objective of a global system of protected areas representing all the world's ecosystems is far from realized, with many major gaps remaining. Some ecosystems, particularly freshwater systems and

marine ecosystems, including on the high seas, are largely unprotected. The increasing number of threatened species is also of major concern. Urgent action is required to complete the system and to thus assist the world in its commitment to significantly reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010. A focus on biomes with inadequate protection should therefore be an important priority for WCPA. There is also a need to fully realize the values of the full diversity of protected area categories and through their effective management to achieve the purpose for which they were established. A crucial

Box 1. Targets to be achieved by the time of the VIth IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban Accord - 2004)

1. A significantly strengthened role for protected areas in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity.
2. All sites whose biodiversity values are of outstanding universal value are inscribed on the World Heritage List.
3. The management of all protected areas is reviewed so that they help alleviate poverty, and do not exacerbate it.
4. A system of protected areas representing all the world's ecosystems is in place.
5. All protected areas are linked into wider ecological/environmental systems of resource management and protection on land and at sea.
6. All protected areas have effective management systems in place.
7. All protected areas have effective management capacity.
8. All existing and future protected areas are established and managed in full compliance with the rights of indigenous peoples, including mobile indigenous peoples, and local communities.
9. The management of all relevant protected areas involves representatives chosen by indigenous peoples, including mobile indigenous peoples, and local communities proportionate to their rights and interests.
10. Participatory mechanisms for the restitution of indigenous peoples' traditional lands and territories that were incorporated in protected areas without their free and informed consent are established and implemented.
11. There is a significantly greater participation of younger people in the governance and management of protected areas.
12. Programmes of support for protected areas are achieved among all major stakeholder constituencies.
13. Effective systems of governance are implemented by all countries.
14. Sufficient resources are secured to identify, establish and meet the recurrent operating costs of a globally representative system of protected areas.
15. All national systems of protected areas are supported by communication and education strategies

component of this is applying the full range of protected area governance and management models with the needed support.

Global change, including climate and socio-economic change, represent an overarching threat to the world's protected areas. These changes are having a negative effect on species and habitats and the effective functioning of landscapes and ecosystems. These threats are cross-cutting with impacts on all aspects of protected areas and they must be addressed in every aspect of WCPA's work.

To address this, an ecosystem or landscape-scale approach to protected area planning must be applied. This requires a conceptual move from protected areas as 'islands' to protected areas as parts of 'networks' and embedded in landscapes. It also means setting protected areas within a wider matrix of ecosystem-based, environmentally sensitive land and water management, supported by the

mainstreaming of environmental considerations into various areas of public policy. This is the ecosystem approach advocated under the CBD.

Finally the full range of objectives and benefits of protected areas must be recognized in their establishment, including their roles in conserving biodiversity, geological diversity and their social, economic and spiritual values. Emerging new opportunities can also demonstrate the value of protected areas to conservation, ecosystem services and poverty alleviation. There is a need to formulate options for adapting and taking advantage of change elements, such as:

- ◆ Biophysical Changes – climate change, air/water pollution, sea-level rise, fragmentation, invasive alien species, and natural disasters;
- ◆ Socio-economic Changes – urbanisation, growing human populations and demographic factors, global trade, democratisation, increased recognition of non-material values of protected areas, conflicts linked to land tenure or the growing demand for access and use of natural resources, financial mechanisms and economic incentives;
- ◆ Institutional Changes – opportunities and threats related to decentralization of authority and responsibility to other levels of government, NGOs and communities; new models for protected areas agencies, the role of the private sector, and changes in the international development policy agenda; and
- ◆ Technological Changes – impact of biotechnology-generated crops, new information technology tools, increasing use of low impacting technologies by extractive industries.

Reconciling conservation with sustainable use and management of natural resources is particularly important, considering population growth and increasing levels of poverty resulting in greater demand for land and resources. In addition there is often limited recognition of the crucial role of protected areas for achieving sustainable development; rather, too many key stakeholders see protected areas as a barrier to their activities and aspirations.

Under-investment by governments in protected areas means that these areas are often failing to meet their conservation and social objectives. Inadequate human and financial resources result in many protected areas lacking effective protection and management, particularly in developing countries. On the other hand subsidies and other perverse financial instruments that are directed towards different sectors of the economy are influencing landscapes critical to biodiversity thus damaging protected areas and contributing to species loss. Sustainable financing is at the core of ensuring that there is capacity to manage protected areas. The costs and benefits of maintaining protected areas are not equitably shared. In particular, local communities often bear most of the costs and receive few of the benefits, while being marginalised from management and decision-making. The full costs and benefits are seldom used in assessing protected areas. A full valuation of protected areas as called for under the Biodiversity Convention PoW must be undertaken and effect must be given to the principles of good governance.

Protected areas are not fully linked into development planning, land use and other resource management decision-making systems beyond their boundaries, and particularly in transboundary situations, which require harmonization of approaches across political boundaries.

Indigenous peoples, local communities, young people, ethnic groups, women and other key interest groups are not sufficiently engaged in the identification and management of protected areas, and nor are their efforts sufficiently recognised.

Without an effectively managed, ecologically representative, global network of protected areas, the many benefits to society derived from them will be lost, the maintenance of ecological services will not be achieved, their ability to contribute to poverty alleviation will be reduced and the inheritance of future generations diminished. The overall aim of “sustainable development” would be just a dream that will never be achieved.

All the above are opportunities for WCPA to step up and show leadership in reaching the targets agreed to by the delegates in Durban.

1.3 Building on the past to respond to the future.

This WCPA Strategic Plan builds on key results achieved from previous Strategic Plans and key recommendations from two external reviews of WCPA (1998 and 2000) but more importantly, the following recommendations arising from WCPA Steering Committee meetings in Finland and Bangkok in 2004:

- ◆ the need to focus on a limited number of key priority issues, building on the strengths and core competencies of WCPA;
- ◆ the need to integrate WCPA work with that of other global and regional components of IUCN, including other IUCN Commissions, within the overall framework of the IUCN Programme;
- ◆ the need to make better use of the limited human and financial resources available to the commission;
- ◆ the need to mobilize additional resources for WCPA through focused fundraising efforts;
- ◆ the need to mobilize work in all regions in addition to the important work undertaken by task forces; and
- ◆ the need to mobilize the membership of the Commission to actively contribute to its work.

This Strategic Plan tries builds on the WCPA track record of achievement while recognizing the constraints and challenges of Commission work that is based on volunteer commitment, and a willingness to assist achieve a common cause.

2. WHY HAVE A STRATEGIC PLAN?

The WCPA comprises over a thousand of the world's leading protected area specialists, committed to a common cause. IUCN provides the opportunity to people concerned with protected areas to join efforts, in a voluntary capacity, under the WCPA umbrella. The world needs the passion and commitment of this volunteer network to deal with the increasing challenges facing protected areas.

To be most effective, the work of the Commission must be focused within a framework of priority protected area issues at all levels, from local to global. While WCPA recognises and indeed honours, the individual efforts of WCPA members towards the cause of protected areas, it is also necessary to mobilise collective and collaborative action involving the whole network and its partners on agreed priorities to maximise impact.

Strategic planning is a disciplined process leading to an agreement on the *raison d'être* of an organization, its activities and the reason it undertakes such activities with a focus on the future.

Accordingly, the WCPA Strategic Plan fulfils five key functions. The Strategic Plan:

1. sets out the desired future for protected areas;
2. identifies objectives and targets to guide the work of WCPA
3. sets out a framework to harness the energy of the Commission as well as mobilizing financial resources whilst targeting emerging opportunities to obtain additional resources;
4. recognises that global change is inevitable and so provides the framework to undertake periodic assessment and adjustment of targets and priorities;
5. provides a framework that can guide activities by individual WCPA members to adapt their efforts to their local, national or regional context while still contributing to WCPA global objectives, and
6. directly links the work of the WCPA to the IUCN Programme.

Therefore the WCPA Strategic Plan IS:

1. the road map to guide WCPA efforts as we move forward, assess the accomplishments against the commitments made at the last WPC and as we begin to prepare for the next WPC;
2. the basis for guiding and reporting WCPA work as a component of the IUCN Programme; and
3. the framework for WCPA to promote integration and synergy with other IUCN global and regional programmes as well as with other IUCN commissions.

However the WCPA Strategic Plan IS NOT:

1. a wish-list of all the work that needs to be done on protected areas issues;
2. a recipe for the work of individual WCPA members, who indeed are encouraged to continue exploring new areas of work that may feed into the Strategic Plan in the future; or
3. intended to cover all of the work of IUCN on protected areas issues as other global and regional programmes deal with other protected areas activities within the overall IUCN Programme.

3. A FRAMEWORK FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

3.1. WCPA strengths and weaknesses

WCPA sees its role as being the world's recognised source of guidance, support and expertise on protected areas. The strengths and weaknesses of WCPA were summarized at the 2004 WCPA Members Meeting (Bangkok, Thailand) as being:

Strengths

- ◆ The excellent people in the network;
- ◆ Ability to convene at a range of levels, particularly at the global level, as seen at the 2003 IUCN World Parks Congress;
- ◆ Influence and impact as seen through products such as the IUCN PA Category System and the Mining and Protected Areas Position Statement;
- ◆ Intellectual capacity;
- ◆ Strong relationship between WCPA and PPA at the global level;
- ◆ Volunteer nature; and
- ◆ Potentially strong network.

Weaknesses

- ◆ Structure: Current structure was designed to prepare for the 2003 WPC and needs revision. Specifically, it is not designed for implementation of the CBD. The current structure is becoming too complex. More balance and integration is required between biome, theme and regional programmes;
- ◆ Regional issues. Regions need a higher profile within WCPA – they have slipped in the last 4 years. There is variability in regional capacity, coverage and performance. Weak synergy between WCPA regions and IUCN regional offices. Poor integration between most Themes/Task Forces and Regions;
- ◆ Funding. Limited funding for activities. No Business Plan for the period after the WPC;
- ◆ People in the network. There is a gender imbalance, a lack of succession planning, and it is becoming harder to find good people willing to work as volunteers;
- ◆ Integration: WCPA not fully integrated into the IUCN One Program Approach

3.2. Guiding principles

Building on the strengths of the Commission and keeping the identified weaknesses in mind the following principles will guide the work of WCPA in promoting and implementing the Strategic Plan. These are:

- a) The Strategic Plan will be implemented as an INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF THE IUCN PROGRAMME. A key of the success of WCPA has been the integration between the IUCN Programme on Protected Areas (PPA) and WCPA. This will continue. Emphasis will be placed on increasing the level of integration between PPA and WCPA with other IUCN global and regional component programmes. Regional Vice Chairs, in particular, are charged with this important responsibility. WCPA is an integral part of IUCN. Thus its work should be clearly linked to, and directed towards the mission, goals, and Key Result Areas of the IUCN 2005-2008 Programme as well as to the four strategic approaches of the Union, which are:
 - ◆ **Knowledge:** generating, integrating, managing and disseminating information is IUCN's core business, with the volunteer networks of the Commissions (particularly WCPA) acting as the key collators of knowledge ;
 - ◆ **Empowerment:** building capacity, responsibility and willingness of people and institutions to plan, manage, conserve, and use nature and natural resources;

- ◆ **Governance:** improving laws, policies, economic instruments and institutions for the conservation and sustainable use of nature and natural resources; and
 - ◆ **Operations:** providing the foundations for effective delivery and use of knowledge, empowerment, and governance through competent management, information, finance, human resources, and communications systems.
- b) **The Strategic Plan INTEGRATES the work of WCPA; it is more than the sum of its activities.** Protected areas are geographic entities. The management of each protected area is governed by the circumstances particular to the region where it is located. Accordingly, the work of the WCPA must have a regional focus to assure relevance but equally to provide the basis or ground truthing by which to draw up global standards and guidelines. This work is undertaken in partnership (see below) and is focused on priorities that are defined as much as through the work at regional levels as the current initiatives or programmes, such as the CBD PoW.
- c) The Strategic Plan will be undertaken in PARTNERSHIP with key groups and stakeholders. The partnerships will include, but be not limited to:
- ◆ IUCN global and regional component programmes and IUCN Commissions;
 - ◆ SCBD in addressing the CBD PoW on Protected Areas
 - ◆ UNESCO/World Heritage Centre, and the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme;
 - ◆ UNEP-WCMC – linked to the maintenance and enhancement of the World Protected Areas Database;
 - ◆ WWF/CI/TNC/BirdLife International – partner organisations with significant involvement in protected area issues. Priority will be given to developing effective working relationships with these organisations, in some cases through formal MOUs, and in particular in the implementation of PALNet;
 - ◆ Protected Area Agencies, at all levels. Priority will be given to working with leaders in national protected areas agencies, particularly through the World Protected Areas Leadership Forum (WPALF);
 - ◆ Appropriate regional organisations and processes (UNEP/SPAW, CCAD, SPREP, etc).
 - ◆ the Ramsar Secretariat
 - ◆ James Cook University (Townsville, Australia) in publishing issues of the Protected Area Best Practice Guideline Series.
- d) **The Strategic Plan will be DEEPENING, not expanding, WCPA work.** WCPA has limited human and financial resources to undertake its work. Rather than stretching these resources by expanding its activities, this Strategic Plan will concentrate and go deeper in areas, related to the core competencies of the commission. In other areas of work, such as those related to freshwater ecosystems, forest protected areas, and arid lands, WCPA will aim to support, within the limited available resources, on-going work of IUCN global and regional programmes dealing with these issues.
- e) **The Strategic Plan will aim to ensure ACCOUNTABILITY.** IUCN supports WCPA's work through the Commission Operations Fund (COF). This enables WCPA to carry out a fundamental part of its work. However this requires accountability on the part of WCPA to report on how this support contributes to the IUCN Programme. This is a key challenge for any commission as volunteer work is hard to measure and monitor. Therefore WCPA will work with the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Programme of IUCN to develop a M&E plan as a key element of this Strategic Plan.
- f) **The Strategic Plan needs to EFFECTIVELY MOBILISE WCPA REGIONAL membership.** The Strategic Plan will only be achieved through the effective recruitment and mobilization of WCPA members at all levels. It must effectively mobilize membership in regions and ensure strong linkages and synergy with IUCN's regional offices. It must focus on the mobilization of new members and encourage youth and women to join and participate in the work of the Commission. This requires enhancing communications to encourage involvement in the different activities proposed. The role of WCPA Regional and Strategic Direction Vice-Chairs as well as Task Forces leaders in mobilizing their networks is essential and is a priority in their respective work plans. As a

guideline each structure is committed to and achieving a 10% representation of their membership by youth (under the age of 35) by 2008. WCPA female membership is currently at 20%. By 2008, women membership should be 35%.

- g) **The Strategic Plan needs to EFFECTIVELY MOBILISE RESOURCES for priority actions.** Resources are necessary for implementation at all levels. To deliver the integrated IUCN programme, including this WCPA Strategy, requires that resources are obtained and efficiently deployed to achieve the priority actions. The Strategic Plan provides a basis for prioritization, and for focusing the resources of specialist voluntary skills, IUCN member organizations, donors, task forces in pursuit of the strategic outcomes. Shared and collective approaches to key funding agencies by IUCN, the WCPA, Task Forces and individual members are required to obtain the resources and ensure that they are effectively and efficiently deployed. There has to be a recognition that strategic priorities must provide the basis for the acquisition and use of funds, and that voluntary inputs are acknowledged.

It is clear that donor mandates will determine which strategic priorities will be funded. However, the Strategic Plan is a statement of what is both NECESSARY and if implemented, SUFFICIENT to achieve the plan's outcomes. An effort must be made to communicate to funders the need to address funding to all components of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan must adapt to the funding context and should be regarded as an enabling framework and not a prescription.

4. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, PRIORITIES, REGIONS & TASK FORCES

This WCPA Strategic Plan is built on a foundation of three fundamental interlinked elements:

- ◆ Strategic Directions
- ◆ Regional Focus
- ◆ Partnerships

The Strategic Directions (SDs) define WCPA overarching priorities. Each WCPA Region is tasked to define the relevance of these Strategic Directions in the context of individual regions, and address them with their relevant partners, and to work collaboratively with the strategic direction leaders to ensure an integrated approach globally and regionally.

The Regional Focus is of course the key role of the Regional Vice Chairs and through them effective linkages with IUCN's regional offices. It is through the Regional Vice-chairs that WCPA delivers assistance on the ground, and where "real" input is derived to guide global programs or develop implementation tools.

Partnerships reflect the formal arrangements where WCPA is a recognized partner. These partnerships permit WCPA to work with others to advance the protected area estate in the world. These three elements together form an integrated and synergistic approach.

The Strategic Directions (SDs) are not stand-alone initiatives as they are interrelated but also linked to the other two elements. The success of protected areas seldom depends on one SD but dimensions of all SDs. To make the point, science and tools of good management of protected areas can only be effective if a solid system of governance and an internal capacity is in place. As well, having an appropriately designed protected area, be it in the form of a system or an individual area is of course essential for achieving objectives.

Task Forces are a very important delivery mechanism for WCPA. Some will fit under a Strategic Direction, and others will be cross-cutting. This further underlines the interrelationship between the SDs.

4.1. Strategic Direction 1: CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY

There has been a dramatic growth in the number and area of protected areas. Global treaties and agreements (notably the CBD, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on Migratory Species, the World Heritage Convention and UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme), and regional agreements and programmes have stimulated the growth of protected area numbers. This significant achievement by governments and others throughout

Priorities include conservation of biodiversity through completion of systems of protected areas, particularly in the marine biome, as well as promotion of ecological networks and the ecosystem approach to enhance biodiversity conservation and, where appropriate, sustainable use of biodiversity.

The World Database on Protected Areas identifies 113,707 protected areas covering 19.61 million km² in all, and 13.2% of the global land surface - this represents a dramatic growth since 1962 when there were only 1,000 protected areas covering 3% of the Earth's land.

the world is worth celebrating.. Nevertheless, there are many gaps in the network and the effectiveness of conserving biodiversity by systems of PAs must be enhanced.

Marine PAs as a priority:

A particular concern arises over the lack of protection for coastal and marine systems, both in sovereign (national) and international waters (the high seas). Less than 1% of the ocean is protected. There has been a worldwide collapse in fisheries and attendant environmental damage and disruption to ecosystem structure and function. There have been many global calls to create many more marine protected areas. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, the World Parks Congress, and the Convention on Biological Diversity have all committed to a goal of establishing a global network of marine protected areas by 2012, including on the high seas.

Marine and coastal biodiversity is under increasing stress from intense human pressures, including rapid coastal population growth and development, over-exploitation of commercial and recreational resources, loss of habitat, and land-based sources of pollution. Almost half of the world's fisheries are fully exploited, while about a fifth are over-fished. About 90% of large predatory fish biomass has been lost since pre-industrial times. Approximately 35% of mangrove forests have been lost over the past two decades. At the same time, people around the world are increasingly dependent on these threatened resources for food, tourism, shoreline protection, and numerous other ecological services. As these pressures intensify, marine protected areas are increasingly recognized as a critical management tool to protect, maintain, and restore natural and cultural resources in coastal and marine waters. A network of marine protected areas, elimination of destructive fishing practices, and the implementation of ecosystem-based management could help meet the global goal of maintaining or restoring fisheries stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield no later than 2015.

Mountain PAs and Connectivity as a priority:

Over the past decades, the recognized importance of protecting Mountain ecosystems resulted in numerous protected areas in the Mountain Biomes around the world. This success has created an opportunity. The world's relatively well-developed systems of Mountain Protected Areas provides the means and then serve as an example by which to address connectivity issues, building ecological networks and applying the ecosystem approach. Mountain protected areas can demonstrate conservation strategies through ecosystem corridors to maintain biodiversity pattern and process in the landscape.

Further, as mountain ecosystems are vulnerable to global changes, including the effects of climate change, they can also serve explore adaptation options while generally raising the profile of the issues. As well, there is a need for a clearer understanding of how cultural and spiritual values can be fully recognized and appropriately protected alongside natural ones. There is also a need to recognize and promote the involvement of a diverse range of communities in protected area establishment and management.

Freshwater PAs as an emerging priority

Freshwater ecosystems are some of the most productive ecosystems on earth. They are of crucial importance to human well-being. However, they are also among our most seriously threatened ecosystems. The establishment of freshwater PAs is part of a total approach to protecting these vital systems while ensuring their continuing capacity to support human well-being.

Filling protected area gaps as a priority:

The Vth World Parks Congress focused attention on the representivity of protected areas globally. Protected areas inadequately represent many species and do not cover key ecosystems besides the above noted shortfall in the marine biome. All of this places at risk the 2010 target of significantly reducing biodiversity loss through the protection afforded by protected areas. The priority now is to build on the work at the World Parks Congress and the achievement of other global agreements relevant to filling gaps, such as the Global Plant Conservation Strategy approved by the CBD COP in 2003, as follows:

Objective

- ◆ Protected Areas more effectively contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, with particular focus on under-represented biomes, especially marine, and on strengthening linkages between protected areas in the landscape/seascape.

Targets

- ◆ By 2008, identify key gaps in the coverage of marine protected areas through the development of a comprehensive 5 volume document: "Priorities for the Establishment and Management of Marine Protected Areas.
- ◆ By 2008, develop innovative corridor and peace park initiatives in three different regions (Africa, Asia and South America to link protected areas with surrounding land uses
- ◆ By 2008, complete a major project on climate change and Protected Areas (with a particular focus on Mountain Protected Areas), paying particular attention on raising the awareness of the impacts of climate change and developing types of adaptive management strategies that will be required, including the role of PAs as buffers against the impacts of climate change
- ◆ By 2012 complete gap analysis of major biomes incorporating critical biodiversity data sets, such as species distribution data, to assist identifying and establishing ecologically representative networks of protected areas;
- ◆ By 2012 ensure the implementation of an ecologically representative network of marine protected areas;
- ◆ By 2012, ensure 40% of mountain protected areas are linked within collaboratively managed ecosystem networks and serve to demonstrate the advantages of integrating protected areas into the objectives of surrounding ecological/social/economic systems;
- ◆ In 2006 work with the IUCN Water and Nature Initiative to further the recognition of the importance of protected areas in the sustainable use and conservation of freshwater ecosystems.

4.2. Strategic Direction 2: KNOWLEDGE, SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

Priorities include knowledge generation and the integration of conservation science, including traditional knowledge, in management effectiveness, conservation tools and mechanisms, protected area management categories, and the setting and maintenance of standards for protected areas.

Completing the global system of protected areas will not be sufficient to achieve biodiversity conservation objectives. It has to be accompanied by maintaining, improving and at times restoring the ecosystems within protected areas. Effective management is essential. Progress has been made through the development of the WCPA framework and associated systems on management effectiveness. But, in many places, monitoring and evaluation

systems need to be adopted and implemented. Elsewhere, they need to be more comprehensive, participatory and affordable and the results better used to guide plans and management. In addition, scientific and other technical research and enquiry should be undertaken to ensure that there is sufficient knowledge of trends in ecological, environmental, social, cultural and economic indicators to allow informed management decisions to be taken. Greater understanding and recognition of traditional management practices is also required.

Knowledge and Science as a priority:

Effective decision-making is dependent upon the development and use of knowledge and scientific information, including biological, social and economic perspectives and harnessing traditional and indigenous knowledge and information. In particular, there is a need to apply this knowledge to key risks and challenges, such as the causes and effects of global change on protected areas. Corresponding plans of action must be drawn up and implemented. Conservation Biology and Restoration Ecology is particularly relevant to protected areas, enabling better understanding of risk and effective prevention and mitigation of impacts. This body of knowledge along with indigenous and traditional knowledge will be encouraged and integrated into protected area planning and management frameworks.

Management effectiveness as a priority:

Many protected areas around the world are not effectively managed. In response, management effectiveness will continue as a priority with a focus on improving on and learning from past approaches. New protocols are needed to evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of management in relation to the IUCN Protected Areas Management Categories, and to take on board the increased recognition of cultural and spiritual factors in the effective management of protected areas. In particular, social and human development perspectives must inform the assessment of management effectiveness. Information arising from the assessment of management effectiveness must be better applied to on ground management actions and also to guide donor support for protected area investment. Such information must also be incorporated into the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA).

IUCN Protected Area Management Categories as a priority:

The IUCN's Protected Areas Management Categories are increasingly being used around the world. However, better guidance on the designation of protected areas and the application of the Categories is required and this should be coupled with efforts to assist countries, and especially CBD states parties, to apply the Categories to their respective protected area systems. An unsatisfactory proportion (62%) of protected areas currently listed in the World Data Base on Protected Areas (2005) are assigned to a PA Category. The inclusion of protected areas in the WDPA must be checked and the accuracy and completeness of listings improved. With regard to categories, there is a need to consider not only the objectives of protected areas, but also protected area systems. In addition, governance types and systems of governance for protected area systems require analysis.

Certification as a priority:

Certification may open new opportunities, benefits and incentives for protected areas management at national and international levels. WCPA aims to explore this possibility with the full involvement of protected areas agencies and key PAs stakeholders. Indicators of management quality to assess the potential application of methods for "certification" of protected areas at national and international levels will be reviewed and applied, as appropriate. This may lead to, among other products, certification of management effectiveness and protected areas under threat.

Objectives:

- ◆ To implement systems to assess the effectiveness of protected area management leading to an improvement in protected area management;
- ◆ To increase the effective application of the IUCN Protected Area Management category system around the world; and
- ◆ To develop methods and tools for the certification of protected areas.

Targets:

- ◆ By 2008, ensure the IUCN PA Management Category System is applied in at least 20 countries to assist preparation of their national system plans for PAs;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure revised guidance on the application of the IUCN Management Categories for Protected Areas is in place and used by all CBD parties and NGOs; and
- ◆ By 2012, develop guidance and standards relating to ecological restoration, protected area design and other key protected area topics
- ◆ By 2012, ensure that at least 50% of IUCN members dealing with protected areas and key partners have assessed the effectiveness of their protected areas management;
- ◆ By 2012, ensure acceptance and application of the methods for assessing management effectiveness of PAs by key donors and partners;
- ◆ By 2012, ensure that 90% of protected areas in the WDPA are assigned to a IUCN PA Category.

4.3. Strategic Direction 3: CAPACITY BUILDING AND AWARENESS RAISING

Priorities include building awareness, promoting effective conservation education and building practitioner's skills, developing strategies for sustainable financing, and generating and disseminating knowledge - including through PALNet

The capacity to manage is the product of willingness, competence, skills, capability, and adequate resources. This strategic direction focuses on strengthening the capacity of protected area agencies and the men and women who work in them. It is built on the basic principle that investment in capacity only comes through an understanding of the full values of Protected Areas and also that strengthening capacity requires knowledge that must be turned into effective action.

Future action needs to focus on widening the awareness and understanding of the values of protected areas, including their contribution to biodiversity protection and supporting sustainable development, and especially their value to indigenous peoples and local communities.

During the past decade, there has been little growth in the resources available for protected areas in many countries. Yet, the role of protected areas in supplying environmental goods and services, such as clean water, as reservoirs for sustaining populations of marine and terrestrial species (including those of commercial importance) and as a buffer for absorbing land- and air-based pollutants, must be better researched and promoted.

Stronger links need to be made between protected areas and the cultural heritage of communities and society, including the sacred and spiritual qualities of these areas. The benefits that protected areas (that include their municipal parks and recreation areas) offer to major towns and cities – including education and human health, watershed protection, biodiversity conservation and income from tourism – need to encourage much greater recognition.

The skills now required to manage protected areas are more specialized and are increasingly getting more complex in light of global changes. In parallel to gaining knowledge, it will be equally important to strengthen science capacities at individual, institutional and societal levels.

The voluntary sector should be encouraged to play a greater role in promoting the benefits of protected areas to communities and individuals living within and outside them. Visitors to protected areas are increasing in numbers and demand will continue to grow. It is important to realize the many positive benefits this can bring, such as revenue generation, increased understanding and awareness of protected areas' natural and cultural values, and greater awareness by local communities of their local heritage. But tourism must be properly planned for and managed to minimize the environmental and cultural damage and costs that can occur.

Building Awareness as a priority:

WCPA will increase its role in advocacy and awareness raising for protected areas and key approaches to protected area management. There will be an overall effort to promote the value of protected areas, and to ensure that the messages of the World Parks Congress are widely disseminated in the inter-Congress period. Particular emphasis will be placed on web-based communication and interaction. The WCPA website and the PALNet website are integrated and are part of the IUCN Knowledge Management System. These websites are designed to serve the needs of the WCPA Commission members and partners, and to reach out to the wider community.

Popularized publications on the values of protected areas through targeted Opinion Editorial Pieces and other media forms will be pursued. A concerted communication effort focused on the value of protected areas would be of value to all countries, developed and developing alike.

Emerging opportunities related to people, protected areas and cities should strive to broaden the constituency of protected areas by providing a channel to increase the interest and support of people living in urban areas.

A specific target for awareness-raising should be decision-makers, politicians and their advisors given the importance of their role for making or hindering progress.

Development of skills in protected areas as a priority:

The promotion of effective conservation education is critical for the future of protected areas. In parallel, effort must be devoted in the coming years to upgrading the professional skills of protected area managers worldwide. These must be based on innovative and adaptive learning approaches that involve key protected area constituencies. Of crucial importance is to marshal the collective efforts of IUCN members and Commission volunteers to present a more comprehensive and targeted capacity development programme. Two particular areas require attention. First, is to increase the capacity of all involved in protected areas to resolve conflicts and to increase the ability to negotiate solutions. Second, is to build up the skills of staff involved in enhancing visitor experiences. These personal experiences build a constituency that in turn develops support and can lead to investments of time and resources.

Following a comprehensive needs analysis focussed on improving the skills of protected area managers, attention will be placed on a strategic approach including influencing the curricula of capacity-development institutions, the provision of authoritative resources for learning (e.g. quality textbooks), and peer-assisted self-learning. This work will be coordinated with the Knowledge Learning Network under development by CEC

Sustainable Financing as a priority:

Funding of protected areas is currently inadequate and must be increased. Funding sources must be diversified and linked to the many values of protected areas. There are significant challenges in generating additional finance without compromising the core values of protected areas. For example, income generation through environmentally sensitive tourism and, in some cases, the sustainable use of natural resources, offers opportunities, but there are dangers too. So while it is important to realize fully the potential benefits of protected areas with innovative financing strategies, protected area planners and managers must consider the pros and cons of different funding options.

While a number of international funding agencies and international conservation NGOs are providing substantial support for protected areas projects, this does not ensure the sustainable financing for protected areas needed in the long term. Tourism can provide additional funding to some but not all protected areas, including some with high and vulnerable biodiversity values. The aim is to increase financial support for protected areas, without compromising their key conservation objectives.

Information Management (including PALNet) as a priority:

The work of WCPA at all levels requires up-to-date and reliable data and information about protected areas. If protected areas are to adapt to global change then this information must be cross-linked to other relevant information such as on species distribution, socio-economic data, and climate change predictions. Protected areas agencies, field managers, and other key groups require better information to guide their work. WCPA must make full and effective use of new opportunities arising from information technology to increase the interactivity of the WCPA network with other networks working on PAs issues, and to enable provision of rapid, reliable and scientific-sound advice on protected areas.

The Protected Areas Learning Network (PALNet) is intended to meet this urgent need. PALNet facilitates the compilation and dissemination of protected area management knowledge among field workers, scientists, and others. At the same time, it provides a facility for managers to share experience, information and documentation with peers around the world. Managers will employ the on-line facility to comment collegially on the work of others and in turn receive input from others on their own. PALNet is a tool that will encourage the engagement of managers to use this "knowledge network" focused on discussions regarding protected area policies, strategies, and field practices. Attention will be paid to identifying a comprehensive range of learning sites, knowledge champions and constituencies to respond to key challenging facing protected area professionals. In all of these efforts, the key challenge will be to utilise internships, mentorship and collaborative learning mechanisms to engage and involve young and emerging protected areas professionals.

WCPA will work within the new directions for knowledge management being undertaken by IUCN HQ. It will also work in partnership with other institutions such as UNEP-WCMC, CI, FFI, TNC, NOAA, WRI, BirdLife International, WWF and GEF Implementing Agencies and partners. Regional Vice-Chairs will be encouraged to identify regional and national institutions that can also contribute to WCPA Knowledge Management efforts. Particularly attention will be given to supporting enhancement of the WDPA, held in UNEP-WCMC, and linking it to the Species Information System (SIS), which is being implemented by IUCN-SSC.

Objectives:

- ◆ To strengthen the capacity of protected area agencies and managers around the world; and
- ◆ To provide guidance and expert advice on options for awareness raising, conservation education, development of skills, sustainable financing and knowledge management, to enhance the planning and management of protected areas.

Targets:

- ◆ By 2008, develop and test at least 5 examples of innovative sustainable financing mechanisms for protected areas in different regions of the world;
- ◆ By 2008, engage at least 20 new constituencies to increase support for implementation of the WCPA mission;
- ◆ By 2008, a comprehensive needs analysis and strategy for professional development of protected area managers is in place and effective;
- ◆ By 2008, the Protected Areas Learning Network (PALNet) will be developed and functioning as the major PA knowledge delivery mechanism for the world's protected areas. It will be fully integrated within IUCN's Knowledge Management System to deliver credible and relevant advice on protected areas;
- ◆ By 2008, all components of WCPA will maintain and use the WCPA website for WCPA work and by the year 2012 the WCPA website will have over 2.0 million hits per year with 10% spending more than 15 minutes per visit.
- ◆ By 2008, the World Data Base on Protected Areas (WDPA) will be developed as the key global database on protected areas and will have clear and effective linkages to other databases, including the Species Information Service, to influence conservation priorities and action; and
- ◆ By 2008, WCPA will have a higher global profile, through dissemination of a universal message regarding the value of protected areas, supported by the preparation and distribution of high profile communication materials and media releases each year.
- ◆ By 2012, ensure that human capacity for protected area management is enhanced, that new capacity-building tools and materials are developed and that these are applied by at least 50% of IUCN members dealing with protected areas, as well as key partners.

4.4. Strategic Direction 4: GOVERNANCE, EQUITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Priorities include: improved governance of protected areas; promotion of the full range of governance types for protected areas; increased participation of indigenous peoples and local communities; promotion of contribution of protected areas to human well-

Governance can be understood as the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibility are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say. Fundamentally, it is about power, relationships and accountability: who has influence, who decides, and how decision-makers are held accountable. Governance is central to the conservation of protected areas throughout the world and is fundamental to ensuring effective and

long-term management of protected areas.

One outcome of good governance is fairly shared benefits and costs. Indigenous people, local communities, and other members of civil society are involved in the establishment and management of protected areas, and derive benefits from protected areas. Thus, protected area authorities and staff

need to engage with all groups in society, especially children and young people, indigenous peoples, local communities and minority ethnic groups.

The types and institutions of governance of protected areas, including government-managed, co-managed, private, (incl. charitable) and based in indigenous and community structures, are constantly evolving and the quality and consistency of governance vary greatly throughout the world. This innovation is essential to capture the complexity of achieving conservation in a wide variety of socio economic and cultural settings. All protected area types voice strong demands for the better reflection of values, effective mechanisms to incorporate local voices and traditions, checks and balances in decentralized structures, better performance and greater accountability, and removing the abuses which occur even in the best of institutions.

Underlying good governance is a set of principles, which needs to be identified by each relevant human society. Some such principles were articulated at the World Parks Congress. These are: legitimacy and voice; direction; performance; accountability; and fairness. More detail on these principles are set out in Annex F. At the COP 7 of CBD the principle of “respecting human rights” was also discussed.

Protected areas also play a critical role in sustaining the natural resource base and thus in supporting the livelihoods of local people, some industries and entire communities. Importantly, they protect vital ecosystem services, including clean water, and are essential for poverty alleviation and for sustainable development. However, in many parts of the world protected areas are viewed as a barrier to the activities and aspirations of local communities. Many poor people also live in and around protected areas, which serve as a vital source of food and fiber. In many cases local communities have been excluded from decision making regarding protected areas, or worse, forcibly removed. As a result such areas are rarely designed with an objective of contributing to sustainable development or to the livelihoods of local communities and economic development. These issues need to be addressed in relation to the future of the world’s protected areas, and particularly marine protected areas.

Governance as a priority:

The governance of all protected areas can and should be improved. The WCPA will contribute to this by describing and analyzing experiences from a range of government types and distilling and widely communicating lessons learnt.

Recognition/ innovation of government types as a priority

The range of governance models for protected areas has expanded in recent years to fit a wide range of circumstances. In particular, Community Conserved Areas established and managed by indigenous peoples and local communities have been recognised as essential for conservation in various contexts. Private protected areas and areas established and managed by regional and municipal governments and by private landowners, including individuals and charitable organisations, have also proven their effectiveness. WCPA will contribute to positive innovation by analysing and communicating good case examples and by supporting the legitimization of the governance institutions that proved viable and effective. Innovative models will also be explored where conventional protected area types have not managed to achieve effective conservation and/or good governance. In particular, governance arrangements for complex protected area types managed by multiple agencies at different levels, such as transboundary protected areas and biosphere reserves will be examined.

Indigenous peoples and local communities as a priority:

Particular attention will be given to the role of indigenous and local people in protected areas and the equitable sharing of benefits. The value of community-conserved protected areas in meeting CBD PoW targets will be a focus. The IUCN guidelines on co-management and community managed protected areas will be promoted and applied. The Commission on Environmental Law will be invited to join the already close working relationship between WCPA and CEESP, through TILCEPA, in relation to tenure and other legal aspects.

Promoting the socio-economic contribution of PAs as a priority:

The continued perception that PAs are only a conservation tool needs to be broken. WCPA will accomplish this through a systematic presentation of the full economic values of protected areas that

includes ecosystem services such as source of fibre, water, and other human needs. As well, the importance of protected areas to local and national economies such as through tourism will be better profiled. These values are integral to national, regional and local sustainable development strategies. Where relevant, the negative impacts of protected areas will be examined and steps taken to identify remedial measures.

Objective:

- ◆ To promote effective types of protected area governance around the world, and good governance in all types;
- ◆ To increase the effective involvement of 25 indigenous peoples and local communities in protected area governance, and
- ◆ To demonstrate and communicate the contribution that protected areas can make to poverty alleviation and sustainable development and the conditions under which those contributions are best achieved.

Targets:

- ◆ By 2008, carry out inventories of Community Conserved Areas in several environments, assess the threats that may be affecting them and identify ways of ensuring the maintenance of their positive contributions to conservation and local culture;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure that principles of good governance (e.g., legitimacy and voice, performance, accountability, fairness, and direction) are identified and increasingly applied for protected areas in a wide variety of contexts;
- ◆ By 2008, make available participatory governance evaluation tools and promote their use for the implementation of the CBD, the World Heritage Convention and Ramsar Convention, as well as in protected areas;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure that one or more variables describing a protected area governance typology are incorporated in the World Database on Protected Areas;
- ◆ By 2008, promote regional agreements and governance structures to support transboundary protected areas and the management of transboundary resources, for example in river basins.
- ◆ By 2012, ensure that protected areas are established and managed in full compliance with the rights of indigenous peoples, including mobile indigenous peoples, and local communities;
- ◆ By 2008, develop fifteen (15) demonstration models in different regions that show how protected areas can contribute to poverty alleviation. These will be associated with a series of roundtable dialogues on protected areas and poverty.
- ◆ By 2008, identify and analyse in several relevant contexts the conditions that lead to positive or negative social impacts of protected areas.

4.5. TASK FORCES

Task Forces provide a very important mechanism to promote in-depth, crosscutting or specialized work within WCPA. The following principles will apply to the operation of Task Forces within WCPA:

- ◆ All Task Forces must have a Terms of Reference, approved by the WCPA Steering Committee, which sets out clear objectives and products;
- ◆ Where possible the work of each Task Force should be linked with a WCPA Theme Programme/ Strategic Direction, although some will be cross cutting initiatives and in some cases cross-Commission initiatives as well;
- ◆ There should be a report provided to the annual Steering Committee from each Task Force in a simple format which measures progress against the objectives of the Task Force;
- ◆ Task Forces are encouraged to produce their own reports and publications, which will be subject to peer review within and beyond WCPA;
- ◆ All Task Forces should communicate with Regional Vice-Chairs regarding the development and application of TF outputs. Regional Vice-Chairs or regional representatives should be invited to participate in specific TF activities; and

- ◆ Task Forces will not receive financial support from the WCPA Commission Operating Fund or the Programme on Protected Areas. They are encouraged to seek their own funding through project proposals, donations or other means while advising the Commission Chair of these fundraising efforts as to ensure coordination and complementary within the overall WCPA Business Plan.

Current WCPA Task Forces (in alphabetic order) as of December 2005 are

1. Caves And Karst
2. Cities And Protected Areas
3. Conservation Planning
4. Cultural And Spiritual Values
5. Indigenous, Local Communities and Equity
6. Grasslands
7. High Seas
8. Information Management
9. Islands
10. PA Categories
11. Protected Landscapes
12. Sustainable Financing
13. Tourism
14. Training
15. Trans-boundary protected areas
16. Wilderness

5. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN – FROM WORDS TO ACTIONS

The Strategic Directions detailed above will be implemented through Partnerships and Regional initiatives.

5.1. PARTNERSHIPS:

There is a need to establish and recognize a common agenda for protected area conservation among diverse constituencies. This should result in the development of many new partnerships, including with those in the business sector and industries that use natural resources that share our objectives and can bring new skills and perspectives to enhance protected areas.

There are a number of international and regional conventions, agreements and processes that relate to biodiversity conservation. Given the need for WCPA to focus its activities to best effect, the work of the commission will target two Conventions; the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (WHC). A Vice-Chair for World Heritage will coordinate input on behalf of WCPA. In the case of the CBD the Chair will provide the required guidance and input to this work.

5.1.1. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

WCPA is contributing to the work of the Union on the CBD, especially with regard to the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas. The work of WCPA on the CBD will be implemented with a number of IUCN members and partners and with other global and regional programmes of IUCN. WCPA is in a particularly important position having been identified within the adopted PoW as a critical contributor.

The CBD provides a major opportunity for WCPA to reinforce its global leadership regarding protected areas and its role as a convener of experts. Accordingly, WCPA has entered into a MOU with the CBD Secretariat to provide specific assistance, through an agreed annual work plan. This provides WCPA with an unprecedented opportunity to serve the 188 Parties to the convention, and the protected area agencies and leaders in those countries, by compiling experience that can influence how protected areas can be most effectively established and managed in the 21st century.

Objectives

- ◆ To help ensure the effective implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas; and
- ◆ Provide substantial input into the review of the CBD POW to be carried out for COP 10.

Target

- ◆ By 2008, ensure WCPA is recognized within the CBD as the main global network of experts on protected areas and is effectively contributing to the achievement of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas;
- ◆ By 2012 ensure the targets within the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas are achieved; and

5.1.2. UNESCO World Heritage Convention

World Heritage sites are those recognized as being of “outstanding universal value”. World Heritage natural sites include some of the most easily recognized and high profile areas on earth, such as the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador) and the Grand Canyon (United States). These sites are of global significance in themselves and can serve as models for demonstrating how protected areas can contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. IUCN has a unique role in relation to the World Heritage Convention (WHC) and it is identified in its text as the advisory body to the convention in relation to natural and mixed World Heritage Sites.

IUCN's advisory services cover:

- a) the evaluation of new sites nominated by State Parties for addition to the World Heritage List;
- b) preparation of State of Conservation Reports on the conservation status of existing World Heritage sites;
- c) support for capacity building programmes in World Heritage Sites; and
- d) preparation of global studies to achieve a balanced WH List. WCPA mobilizes its membership to support delivery of IUCN advisory services to the Convention.

Objectives

- ◆ To ensure that IUCN effectively fulfils its advisory services in relation to the World Heritage Convention and maintains the highest quality standards in site assessment; and
- ◆ To promote the full potential use of World Heritage sites as models of best practice for other protected areas.

Targets

- ◆ By 2008, ensure WCPA's role in the World Heritage Convention is strengthened, particularly through more effective use of WCPA members;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure that World Heritage sites are more effectively used as flagships for global efforts to achieve biodiversity conservation and sustainable development;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure enhanced management of at least 20 World Heritage sites as a result of WCPA technical advice to site managers and national agencies; and
- ◆ By 2008, prepare and distribute targeted guidelines relevant to the management and the values of world heritage sites.

5.1.3. UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)

UNEP-WCMC aims to provide objective, scientifically rigorous products and services to ensure that biodiversity information is available to support decision makers at all levels. UNEP-WCMC maintains the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), working in close collaboration with IUCN, WCPA and with the WDPA Consortium¹. Delivery of the WDPA is a key element in CBD COP decisions VII/5, VII/28 and VII/30, the Durban Action Plan and WPC recommendations. UNEP-WCMC, IUCN and WCPA are also collaborators in delivery of the United Nations List of Protected Areas.

UNEP-WCMC is mandated by the CBD Conference of the Parties to facilitate the delivery of information and indicators on protected areas. Specifically decisions of COP7 invite the Centre to work with others to:

- ◆ Facilitate the compilation of information necessary for reporting on achievement of the 2010 target (decision VII/30)
- ◆ Further develop the World Database on Protected Areas in order to assist the monitoring of progress (decision VII/28).
- ◆ Provide and maintain up-to-date information on marine and coastal protected areas (decision VII/5)

Working in partnership with UNEP-WCMC, WCPA will strive to increase access to information on the world's protected areas, and to support assessment of progress made in achieving internationally agreed targets on protected area establishment and management. This partnership will also enable and strengthen the work of the WDPA Consortium in further developing and enhancing the WDPA and access to it.

Objectives

- ◆ To track progress in developing and implementing the establishment of protected areas
- ◆ To improve the quality, value and use of the World Database on Protected Areas

Targets

- ◆ By 2006 complete review of the current status of the WDPA and its ability to deliver the indicators and other information services expected of it.
- ◆ By 2007 complete implementation of modifications to WDPA structure/function, and have in place improved information flows and quality control mechanisms.
- ◆ By 2007 complete the implementation of a web based information delivery mechanism disseminating PA related data (including indicators on management effectiveness)
- ◆ By 2008 deliver the next edition of the UN List

5.1.4. Other Partnerships;

Up to September 2005 WCPA has entered into MOUs with the IRF, UNDP, SCBD, the WDPA Consortium, and James Cook University. WCPA will actively seek to develop new partnerships that can support the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Such new partnerships would be guided by:

- ◆ Shared vision and objectives on protected areas issues as well as shared understanding and respect on the role of volunteers;
- ◆ Recognition of the strengths/weaknesses of each institution as a key condition to achieve synergy and added-value;
- ◆ Recognized track-record on conservation and environmental concern, particularly in the case of the private sector, and;
- ◆ Partnership will be guided by a defined set of agreed objectives, activities and outputs that could be formally adopted through MOUs, Letter of Agreements or other appropriate means.

6. WCPA REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

Since 1958 WCPA has worked regionally, pioneering IUCN efforts towards regionalization. At present WCPA has 16 terrestrial regions, each headed by a Regional Vice Chair.

Each WCPA region should develop a regional programme in partnership with IUCN Regional and Country Offices (RCOs), where they exist, and in collaboration with the Strategic Direction Leaders. A number of WCPA regions have developed Regional Action Plans for Protected Areas. However the effective implementation of these plans has been limited due to a number of factors, including limited funding, the limited capacity of the IUCN Secretariat to support WCPA regional Vice-Chairs and the uneven success in mobilizing WCPA membership in some regions.

WCPA has been successful in working at the regional level where; a strong organizational structure in support of the Regional Vice Chair is in place, partnerships have been established with IUCN-RCOs to support regional initiatives, such as the Meso-American Biological Corridor in Central America, or when WCPA has worked with IUCN members and partners to implement common priorities, such as in the case of Parks for Life: Action for Protected Areas in Europe and WCPA initiatives in East Asia. Current WCPA Regions (in alphabetic order) are:

1. Australia/New Zealand;
2. Brazil;
3. Caribbean;
4. Central America;
5. East Asia;
6. Eastern Africa
7. Europe;
8. Hispanic South America;
9. North America;
10. North Eurasia;
11. North Africa/ Middle East;
12. Pacific;
13. South Asia;
14. South East Asia;
15. Southern Africa; and
16. Western and Central Africa.

Objective for all WCPA Vice-Chairs

- ◆ to ensure that Regional Action Plans are integrated with IUCN Regional and Country Offices wherever possible.

Targets

- ◆ By 2008, develop and implement effective regional programmes in all WCPA Regions;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure effective regional inputs to the Strategic Directions of this Strategic Plan and to seek the support of Strategic Direction Leaders in developing and delivering the regional Action Plans;.
- ◆ By 2008, develop, in at least 5 regions, relevant protected area projects, with IUCN RCOs and other parts of the IUCN family including other Commissions, wherever possible;
- ◆ By 2008, supported by UNEP-WCMC and the IUCN Secretariat, ensure that Regional Vice-Chairs are effectively contribute to the updating of the WDPA in each region, including helping Countries to appropriately assign protected areas to IUCN Categories;
- ◆ By 2008, ensure thematic and regional Vice Chairs are providing WCPA technical advice to global and regional initiatives and projects dealing with protected areas issues.

7. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

7.1. Governance of the Commission

7.1.1. Steering Committee

The WCPA Steering Committee is the governing body of the Commission. Its responsibility is to ensure adequate planning, implementation and evaluation of the Commission Strategic Plan, as required under the IUCN Statutes. The Steering Committee comprises: the WCPA Chair, the Deputy Chair, the Head of IUCN Programme on Protected Areas, Strategic Direction Vice Chairs; the World Heritage Vice Chair; the Regional Vice Chairs and the WCPA Senior Advisors (Annex A). SC members are invited to serve by the Chair, and are approved by the IUCN Council. All SC members are requested to develop clear TOR to guide their work and use resources in a cost-effective manner. On the basis of these TORs the Chair will review performance of the Vice-Chairs on an annual basis.

SC meetings are generally held once per year and are called by the Chair and supported by the PPA Secretariat. Members of the SC are expected to attend all SC meetings, meet their terms of reference, and contribute to the implementation of the WCPA Strategic Plan. Task Force leaders as well as Senior Advisors are invited to attend meetings of the Steering Committee, at their own cost.

7.1.2. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (ExCo) of WCPA will include the Chair, Deputy Chair, Two Senior Vice Chairs, and the Head of the IUCN Programme on Protected Areas. Other Steering Committee members will be invited to participate where relevant. The ExCo will conduct the business of the Commission between sessions of the full Steering Committee, and will work electronically or by telephone conference call.

7.1.3. Regional WCPA Vice-Chairs

Regional Vice Chairs provide leadership, co-ordination, and representation of members and stakeholders in each of WCPA's 16 regions. Their Terms of Reference focus on development and implementation of a clear WCPA Programme in their Region, as well as the mobilization and motivation of WCPA Members. Specifically, Regional Vice Chairs bring the views of their region to the global Steering Committee, and vice versa, and communicate WCPA outputs, guidelines, and proposals to their constituency. Regional Vice Chairs are expected to work together with IUCN Regional and Country Offices, where they exist.

7.1.4. IUCN Programme on Protected Areas (PPA)

The IUCN Programme on Protected Areas (PPA) is one of the Global IUCN Programmes. Its primary focus is to ensure effective implementation of the protected areas component of the IUCN Programme, the implementation of IUCN/WCCs resolutions and recommendations focusing on protected areas. The Programme comprises a small team of 9 staff (including 2 interns and part time employees) working at the IUCN Headquarters in Gland, Switzerland, linked with a number of staff in IUCN Regional and Country Offices (see Annex D). PPA supports the work of WCPA, however it also undertakes other statutory, programmatic and contractual obligations as part of the IUCN Secretariat. PPA is accountable to the IUCN-DG and the IUCN Programme that guides its work, however this work integrates with the mission and objectives of the WCPA Strategic Plan.

The overriding principle is to blend the work of WCPA and PPA into a "one Programme" approach.

7.1.5. WCPA Membership

Individuals are invited to become members of WCPA on the recommendation of Regional or Strategic Direction Vice Chairs. Members are invited on the basis of expertise in the field of protected areas and a willingness to become involved in the activities of WCPA on a voluntary basis. During the 2005 – 2012 period, priority will be given to:

- ◆ By 2008, ensuring that 10% of the WCPA membership are young people (under 35 years of age);
- ◆ By 2008, ensuring that at least 35% of the WCPA membership are women;
- ◆ By 2008, ensuring there is a motivated membership in each region; which is actively involved in the activities of WCPA;
- ◆ By 2008, ensuring there is an accurate and up to date WCPA membership database that is accessible to all members through the IUCN Knowledge Network.
- ◆ By 2006, entrepreneurial and innovative members of WCPA are recognized and their contributions publicised widely

7.2. Financial support and fundraising

IUCN provides limited direct financial support to the work of WCPA through the Commission Operations Fund (COF). While providing for basic operations of the commission, it is insufficient to implement the WCPA Strategic Plan. Priority will thus be given to fundraising to implement the targets outlined in this Strategic Plan. It is expected that Steering Committee Members will develop fundraising proposals, in close cooperation with the IUCN Programme on Protected Areas, to this end.

7.3. Annual work plans and accountability

The WCPA Chair is accountable to the IUCN Council for ensuring the best use of the COF. Therefore the allocation of the COF will be based on clear annual work plans that support implementation of the Strategic Plan. All receiving funding from the COF will be requested to prepare a work plan and report back annually to the WCPA Chair on its implementation.

7.4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Strategic planning is an ongoing interplay between developing and striving towards a vision, setting and measuring the achievement of goals, and the experience and adaptation of implementation. Monitoring and evaluating performance of the WCPA and Programme of Protected Areas within the framework of the IUCN Quadrennial Programme is an essential activity that underpins this Strategic Plan.

The WCPA Steering Committee is the custodian of the plan, and responsible for ensuring that there is regular measurement of achievement in each Strategic Direction, within each Region and for each Task Force. In addition, it must review its own effectiveness and efficiency.

WCPA will regularly monitor the extent to which the objectives and targets in this Strategic Plan are being achieved. Monitoring reports will be prepared and distributed within IUCN and to other stakeholders. The WCPA Steering Committee is responsible for monitoring and is supported by IUCN's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Coordinator.

It is important to note that while the monitoring and evaluation of the overall Strategic Plan will be the responsibility of the WCPA Chair this work will also be dependent on the cooperation and input of WCPA Vice-Chairs. Evaluation requirements for WCPA are triggered by both statutory requirements for evaluation of Commissions, as well as donor requirements for evaluation of projects that may be implemented as part of the Strategic Plan. WCPA evaluations may be initiated by IUCN, including reporting back to the World Conservation Congress. IUCN's M&E Programme will assist, within available resources, with the design of evaluations, methodology, consultants and coaching of WCPA teams as needed. Once the Strategic Plan is adopted by the Steering Committee the IUCN's M&E Programme will work together with WCPA-Chair and PPA to design and propose for the consideration of the Steering Committee a detailed Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the WCPA Strategic Plan.

In addition there will be a major review of the achievement of this Strategic Plan at the Durban Mid Term Review meeting, in 2008.

8. LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 6th WORLD PARKS CONGRESS

The Durban Mid-term Review meeting in 2008 marks an important milestone towards the 6th World Parks Congress in 2012. The WCPA Steering Committee, in conjunction with the IUCN Secretariat, must envisage the 6th World Parks Congress in response to the outcomes of the Durban Action Plan and the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas.

During the period 2005 – 2008, priority will be given to:

- ◆ By 2007, organising the Durban Mid-Term Review meeting;
- ◆ By 2008, identifying key issues that are affecting the roll-out of the Durban Plan of Action and CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas, and developing effective responses;
- ◆ By 2008, identifying timing, venue, and programme options for the staging of the World Parks Congress;
- ◆ By 2008, considering the structure and composition of the WCPA Steering Committee as the organizational driving force for the period leading up to the 6th World Parks Congress.
- ◆ By 2008, setting in place a programme of advocacy and fund-raising to match the requirements for preparation and hosting of the World Parks Congress.

9. FINAL REMARKS

Strategic planning is an ongoing and dynamic process. Throughout the implementation of this Strategic Plan lessons learnt from monitoring and evaluation will provide ongoing feedback to continuously improve WCPA's work. A reasonable balance must be found between using the plan as a tool to provide overall direction and to keep WCPA work focused on identified objectives, while maintaining flexibility to respond to emerging issues. Therefore this Strategic Plan should be neither too rigid, nor too flexible, as an instrument. Indeed, it is our roadmap to guide WCPA efforts in the years to come. Therefore let's take shortcuts where opportunities arise to advance the mission of WCPA, but avoid changing directions too often. That's the challenge! It shouldn't be difficult: our compass (or GPS if you like) should guide WCPA to the next World Parks Congress in 2013.

Organisational Structure of WCPA

